

### Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 31-45 remain pending in the application, with Claims 31, 36 and 41 being independent. Claims 31, 36 and 41 have been amended herein.

Claims 31-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,657,741 (Barry et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Each of independent Claims 31, 36 and 41 recites, inter alia, discriminating whether a document comprising a plurality of pages is to be printed as a plurality of copies or as a single copy, and generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document copy by copy, even when the number of copies is greater than or equal to the number of the printers, if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a plurality of copies, and generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document page by page if discriminated that the document is to be printed is a single copy.

Support for the amendments to the claims can be found in the specification at least at the example described at page 23, line 20 to page 24, line 2. In particular, when a document has four pages and four copies of the document are to be printed with three printers, the print data of all four pages is sent to the first printer, to the second printer, to the third printer and again to the first printer.

Barry et al. relates to a multiple print engine system that can allow a plurality of work stations to create individual print jobs and then transfer them to a

distributing processor. Referring to the flowchart of Fig. 5 of Barry et al., if the number of copies  $M$  is greater than or equal to the number of print engines  $E$  (step 236-Y), then print data is distributed to four engines  $E_1$ - $E_4$  (step 244). Each of engines  $E_1$ - $E_3$  prints  $N$  (the number of pages in a single document)  $\times M/E$  and engine  $E_4$  prints the rest (steps 246, 248, 250, 256). The calculation  $N \times M/E$  does not lead to copy-by-copy printing. That is, supposing that a document has four pages ( $N=4$ ) and five copies of the document are to be printed ( $M=5$ ) with four printers ( $E=4$ ), then according to the processing in Fig. 5,  $P_1, P_2, P_3 = N \times M/E = 4 \times 5/4 = 5$  pages and  $P_4 = N \times M - (P_1 + P_2 + P_3) = 5$  pages. However, each copy of the document has only four pages. On the other hand, with the present invention, if the same conditions are applied, one of the four printers prints two copies of the document and the other three printers each print one copy.

Thus, Barry et al. fails to disclose or suggest at least generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document copy by copy, even when the number of copies is greater than or equal to the number of printers, if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a plurality of copies, and generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document page by page if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a single copy, as is recited in independent Claims 31, 36 and 41.

Accordingly, Barry et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 31, 36 and 41.


Therefore, independent Claims 31, 36 and 41 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 31, 36 and 41. Dependent Claims 32-35, 37-40 and 42-45 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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